

SITUATION REPORT NO. 5
FINAL REPORT
INCIDENT NO. 98-002 (Continuation of 97-015)
DATE: March 23, 1998 TIME: 12:00 p.m.

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Flooding statewide. *Special note: This will be the final report for Incident No. 98-002. We will use Incident No. 98-017 to document 1998 spring flooding activities and to provide closeout progress of previously declared presidential disasters from 1993 to 1997. Reports will also be issued for Incident No. 98-001, which will address continuing Devils Lake flooding.*
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: No change from previous reports.
3. DAMAGES: State Emergency Management officials and the State Flood Disaster Recovery Coordinator now estimate that the state share for the disaster recovery costs related to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) programs implemented through the Major Presidential Disaster Declaration of April 7, 1997, will total about \$18.5 million. This remains an estimate as final repair liabilities and costs are still undetermined.

The National Weather Service (NWS) issued a revised Spring Snowmelt Flood Outlook report on March 13.

The outlook indicates that moderate to major spring flooding could occur along the Pembina River, from the Canadian border to the river's confluence with the Red River. That outlook is based on current conditions and future normal precipitation and temperatures. NWS hydrologists expect the Pembina River to rise within inches of 1997 record levels at Walhalla and Neche. The outlook calls for the river at Walhalla to rise to 15 feet; flood stage is 11 feet. The flood of record level is 16.2 feet. The river at Neche is forecasted to rise to 24 feet. Flood of record was 24.5 feet in 1997. Moderate flooding indicates that evacuation may be required, inundation of secondary roads may occur, and property may have to be relocated to a higher elevation. The NWS defines major flooding as a general term including "extensive inundation and property damage, usually characterized by the evacuation of people and livestock and the closure of both primary and secondary roads."

The outlook also calls for Devils Lake to peak more than 2 ½ feet higher than the 1997 record level of 1,443 feet. If precipitation is above normal and evaporation is below normal, the lake could peak at 1,445.5 feet or higher. If precipitation is below normal, the lake could peak below 1,445 feet. The northwest part of the Devils Lake Basin has snow depths ranging from 12 to 24 inches. Water equivalents are generally two to four inches, although some areas have as much as five to six inches. Snow depths in the southeastern half of the basin range from three to six inches with water equivalents of one-half to 1.5 inches. The outlook calls for the lake to peak in June or July.

On the Souris River, a minor to moderate flood potential exists between Towner and Westhope. Snow depths in the upper part of the Souris River Basin were 12 to 18 inches with water equivalents of one to two inches. Snow depths in the eastern half of the basin also ranged from 12 to 18 inches, although there were reports of 24 to 30 inches of snowfall. Water content averaged two to four inches for the area. Soil moisture conditions were slightly below normal for central North Dakota.

Additionally, minor snowmelt flooding could occur in the Red River Valley, according to the revised Spring Snowmelt Flood Outlook. Minor snowmelt flooding is defined by the NWS as a general term indicating "minimal or no property damage, but possibly some public inconvenience." The outlook had been downgraded from the February 27 report that called for minor to moderate flooding. Most of the Red River Basin experienced earlier than normal crests because of February snowmelt and rainfall. The outlook indicated that the Red River and its tributaries contain a significant amount of ice that reformed after very cold temperatures occurred during the second week of March. According to the NWS, river stages that were reached with the early runoff were ice affected by as much as five feet.

The Red River of the North recently rose above flood stage at Grand Forks, Drayton and Oslo, Minn., causing limited flooding in low-lying areas. Rain and snowfall caused gradual increases in river levels throughout the Red River Basin. Unseasonably mild temperatures resulted in additional runoff, which contributed to the rises. The Red River crested at 39.8 feet in Grand Forks on March 5. In response to river rises, city officials placed a crisafulli pump at Belmont Road and 15th Avenue to pump water off the Lincoln Park Golf Course. Five loads of sand were hauled to the city's "Sandbag Central" if closure of Riverside Park had been necessary. The river dropped below its 28-foot flood stage at Grand Forks on March 12. Downstream in Walsh County, rises in the Red River caused limited flooding in low-lying areas. The river crested at 34.5 feet at nearby Oslo on March 10. The river dropped below its 28-foot flood stage by March 13. Limited flooding also occurred in Pembina County. Snow-blocked drains caused water to flow over two township roads. Basement seepage was reported throughout the county because of the area's high water table. The river at Drayton rose to 35.8 feet on March 10, and dropped below its 32-foot flood stage on March 16.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from previous reports.

STATE: No change from previous reports.

FEDERAL: No change from previous reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: No change from previous reports.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: The Federal/State Disaster Field Office (DFO) in Bismarck and the Satellite DFO in Grand Forks closed March 20. The offices were established on April 7 and have served as a base of operations for North Dakota Emergency Management, FEMA, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and other federal, state and local relief workers. A small FEMA program staff will remain in the state until May to continue to work with North Dakota Emergency Management on remaining recovery issues.

North Dakota Emergency Management and FEMA have approved the city of Grand Forks' application to begin demolishing 49 flood-damaged homes in the Lincoln Park area. The city is acquiring homes under the Federal/State Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Although approximately 700 homes may eventually be part of the acquisition process, this initial group of homes was identified by the city for the first round of demolitions.

Job Service North Dakota has placed 803 people to work at 49 job sites as part of its Disaster Assistance Program (DAP). The program assists workers who lost their jobs because of a disaster and public agencies and private nonprofit agencies in need of help with their recovery efforts. DAP was funded by Title III of the Jobs Training Partnership Act on April 22, 1997, under the National Reserve Account Disaster Program. Job Service received a total of \$4.5 million for the program. The

effective ending date is April 30, 1998, but Job Service has requested an extension through June 30, 1998. The first workers started May 12, 1997. Workers performed flood-related work in Grand Forks, Spirit Lake Nation at Devils Lake, Wahpeton and Mayville. To date, 284 workers are still employed.

FEMA officially closed the Individual and Family Grant Program for FEMA-1001-DR-ND on February 20, 1998. The program was established in spring 1993 in response to statewide flooding.

The 1997 Spring Flood Individual and Family Grant Program, administered by North Dakota Emergency Management, has approved nearly \$14.2 million in grants to individuals for flood losses. The average IFGP grant is \$1,341. The staff has closed 23,244 cases. Of the more than 23,000 IFGP applications processed for grant awards, only 15 have been appealed by the applicants. Of those appeals, 13 were denied and two were paid in full.

As of March 18, FEMA and State Emergency Management Public Assistance staffs had received 4,376 Damage Survey Reports (DSRs) and have obligated funds for 4,133 DSRs. Survey work has been completed for 410 of the 440 applicants for the 1997 flood. At this time, nearly \$121.3 million in infrastructure repairs, emergency work and debris removal has been determined to be eligible statewide.

The North Dakota Hazard Mitigation Team has obligated the entire \$38.6 million available through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) for projects designed to reduce or eliminate the risk of future flooding statewide. To date, nearly \$31 million of those available funds have been approved, or are pending FEMA approval. Projects include acquisition of properties in floodplains and infrastructure enhancements to include sluice gates, flap gates and lift stations.

The Small Business Administration (SBA) has approved a total of \$182 million in low-interest loans for businesses and individuals. To date, the SBA has received 11,707 loan applications, 6,967 of which have been approved. Of the total amount of money loaned, 54 percent were to home owners and renters for real estate and personal property losses, and 46 percent were to business owners for repairs to businesses and for lost income.

To date, 24,491 awards have been approved for nearly \$54.2 million in Disaster Housing assistance provided by FEMA.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No change from previous reports.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.
9. OTHER: Other web site addresses for flood recovery information include:

City of Grand Forks: <http://www.grandforks.com>
N.D. League of Cities: <http://www.ndlc.org>
N.D. State Water Commission: <http://water.swc.state.nd.us>
N.D. Attorney General Office: <http://www.state.nd.us/ndag>
N.D. Department of Agriculture: <http://www.state.nd.us/agr/>
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: <http://www.ncs-wc.usace.army.mil>
U.S. Geological Survey: <http://srv1dndbmkr.cr.usgs.gov/public/index.html>

Douglas C. Friez, State Director